

## VOTE - Voter Outreach Through Education Washington Secretary of State

### UNITED STATES AND WORLD CURRICULUM GRADES 8-12

#### TEACHER: LESSON 6(B)

#### THEME: TIMELINE OF SUFFRAGE HISTORY

##### Teacher Note:

This timeline is for use in conjunction with Student Lesson Seven (CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED; WHOSE CONSENT?) and Student Lesson Eight (NOW I SEE WHY THAT HAPPENED!). These lessons can be done separately or in tandem. Read the Teacher Lesson Plan pages for each student activity before deciding the order in which to use them, then copy and distribute enough of the TIMELINES and activity sheets for each of your students. Also, you may want to explain the meaning of the word "suffrage."

- A. 17th and 18th centuries: Many colonies dropped religious tests for voting, but left property qualifications in the belief that only men of means with ownership in their communities could vote responsibly.
- B. 1775 - 1781 (during the American Revolution): Property qualifications for voting were lowered in many states, with several states already granting suffrage rights to any white male who paid taxes.
- C. 1787: The U.S. Constitution is ratified, giving white male property owners age 21 and over the right to vote.
- D. 1787, Article IV, Section 4, of the US Constitution: The United States shall guarantee to every state in this Union a republican form of government..." Thomas Jefferson argued that the true basis of a republic (representative democracy) is the equal right of every citizen to have an equal voice in the government's direction.
- E. 1780 - 1807: In 1807, New Jersey took away voting rights for both women and blacks even though some women had voted in New Jersey for about 20 years after its Constitution extended voting to all "free inhabitants."
- F. 1807 - 1843: National laws passed that eventually extended suffrage to all white men 21 and older, regardless of property holdings or religion.
- G. 1821: All states have ended property requirement and most taxpaying requirements for voting.
- H. 1848: Start of the "women's suffrage" movement by Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who called the Seneca Falls Convention, to proclaim that "all men and women are equal."
- I. 1860: Universal white male suffrage is the practice in all Southern states.
- J. 1867: Voting is allowed by blacks in the District of Columbia and U.S. territories by a Congressional act.
- K. 1868, Amendment XIV (14), Section 1, of the US Constitution: "All citizens born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the US and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge (limit) the privileges...of the citizens...nor deny any person within its jurisdiction equal protection of the laws."
- L. 1869: Wyoming granted full suffrage to women.
- M. 1870: All states are forbidden by Amendment 15 to deny any person the vote on grounds of race, color or previous condition of servitude.
- N. 1888: The Australian ballot was first introduced in the United States to promote objectivity and privacy in voting. The government, rather than political parties, print it.
- O. 1890: Mississippi was the first to enact poll taxes and literacy tests, voting laws requiring long residence in the state and district, and loss of voting rights if convicted of certain crimes.
- P. 1896: A process of absentee voting for both civilians and military personnel is first established by Vermont.

- Q. 1913: 17th Amendment was ratified, creating direct popular election of U.S. Senators. Formerly, U.S. Senators were chosen by their State Legislatures.
- R. 1913: Alice Paul led a march of men and women in Washington D.C. to promote a women's suffrage Amendment. Many were arrested for "obstructing traffic" or "disorderly conduct."
- S. 1920: The Nineteenth Amendment, giving women the right to vote, was ratified.
- T. 1924: Congress granted citizenship to all Native Americans born in the U.S. Because the right was governed by state law, until 1948, some states barred Native Americans from voting.
- U. 1964: The Twenty-fourth Amendment, banning poll taxes, was ratified.
- V. 1964: A Civil Rights Act was passed including a requirement that if literacy tests for voting were given, they had to be administered in writing, not orally, so scores could be validated.
- W. 1965: A landmark Voting Rights Act authorized the federal government to take over registration of voters in areas where state officials had regularly prevented blacks and other minorities from registering to vote or cast their ballots through usage of literacy tests, grandfather clauses, and intimidation.
- X. 1971: The Twenty-sixth Amendment was ratified, giving 18 year olds the right to vote.
- Y. 1982: Amendments to the Voting Rights Act extended the right to vote guarantees given in the 1965 legislation. Further provisions for Americans with disabilities, voters not able to read and write and those not fluent in English, were added to insure their freedoms.
- Z. 1993: The National Voter Registration Act (Motor Voter) expanded the opportunity for convenient voter registration for every person of voting age by increasing the number of active government agencies serving as registries. The Departments of Safety, Health, & Human Services, Mental Health and Retardation, and Veteran's Affairs are required to include voter registration applications with their own department's forms. Other government offices such as driver license offices, schools, libraries, post offices, county clerk offices and the Registrar of Deeds also have voter forms available to the public.

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Information sources include:

[Office of the Secretary of State, Washington State](#)  
[The Close Up Foundation](#)  
[The Democracy Online Project](#)  
[Federal Election Commission](#)